

THE HISTORICAL TRAIL



The Historical Trail

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New Jersey Annual Conference of the
Methodist Church**

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- FOREWARD -

The **Historical Trail** booklet issued by the Rev. Robert B. Steelman and his committee has become a permanent part of the New Jersey Conference Historical Society. We are pleased to present this issue to the members and the friends of our Annual Conference.

The Articles in this booklet have been contributed by friends who are familiar with their church and community history. Our Conference history is little known by many people living in South Jersey.

A copy of the **Historical Trail** will be mailed to each member of our Society. Copies will also be for sale at the Annual Conference in Ocean City.

These booklets through the years will seek to cover Methodist historical churches, parsonages, church cemeteries and personalities.

We are greatly indebted to all who have thus far assisted in this phase of the work. The Committee solicits the cooperation of anyone having old pictures, records and items of historical value.

Rev. Steelman would be most grateful to hear from any person with ideas, suggestions and material for future publications.

D. C. Evans, President

**Cover:
Statue of Francis Asbury on
The Drew University Campus,
Madison, N.J.**

Photo courtesy of
Joseph Henry Bennett

SOME NOTES ON WHITEFIELD IN SOUTH JERSEY

There are some historical relationships between early Methodist beginnings in South Jersey and the stirring visits Whitefield made to Philadelphia and to "the Jerseys," especially "down Jersey." The lapse of time deprives us of knowing the whole story in detail of South Jersey Methodism's beginnings. I share with you a few brief notes on one phase of the story — namely something of the influences that flowed from Whitefield's comings and goings, especially as seen in the life of an early Methodist layman.

This will take us back to Whitefield's visits to Philadelphia. The effects therefrom, according to a careful student "were more than a passing wave of emotion". After the first visit "daily religious services continued far over a year." "The output of religious books was astonishing, especially of Whitefield's sermons and journals and the Wesleys' hymns." "Twenty-six associations for prayer were formed."¹

A local Philadelphia merchant, Edward Evans, was converted under Whitefield's preaching. We do not know exactly when. In his manuscript *Journal* at Old St. George's Church Joseph Pilmoor, one of Wesley's missionaries who came over to America in October of 1769, tells of an early visit with this Methodist layman and speaks of him as "an old disciple of Jesus, and one who has stood fast in the faith for nearly thirty years."

Edward Evans is honored by Methodists as an early trustee of Old St. George's and is probably better known in this way and as the father of the distinguished poet, the Rev. Nathaniel Evans,² than he is for his lay preaching in "the Jerseys," Nathaniel's published poetry are collector's items.

Greenwich below Gloucester seems to have been an early center of religious interest. It was mostly known as Mantua Creek and several Anglican families lived in the area. Whitefield had preached here during his spring tour of 1740 and here was one of the missions served by the Rev. Nathaniel Evans, who was much beloved as was his father. Probably as a result of the need and shortage of spiritual leadership Edward Evans began preaching here in the late 1760's to "an assorted congregation — Methodists, half-Quakers, Episcopalians, and a few people of Swedish Lutheran descent."³ The Rev. Nicholas Collin, missionary at Raccoon

(Swedesboro) for the Swedish Lutheran Church was not sympathetic with the work at Greenwich. In his *Journal* he speaks of Edward Evans as "a good, old, simple-minded man who had not been ordained, nor of any particular religion"¹. This sounds a bit prejudiced.

Ground was bought on November 29, 1770 for a church and cemetery and on the original list of managers one finds Evans name at the head along with same friends as Francis Asbury, Jesse Chew and Squire Price, mentioned in Asbury's *Journal*. The cemetery still stands by the road at Mt. Royal, protected by a wall of stones, some of which I suspect came from the foundation of the early church. The successor church, St. Peter's Episcopal Church at Clarksboro, not far away, still maintains the lot.

Some have called the Greenwich Church "the first Methodist meeting house in New Jersey"², or "the first class and the first society founded in the State"³. Dr. Nelson Burr says the deed shows the parish was intended to be Anglican. Most of the contributors were Anglicans according to Dr. Burr, and the Methodists being a part of the Anglican parish, so to speak, not having as yet formed their own denomination, felt they had a right to use the building.⁴

Actually we do not know whether there was an organized society of Methodists there, but we do know that the Rev. Thomas Rankin, who succeeded Asbury as Wesley's representative for a time did agree on Sept. 13, 1774 to the understanding that the building was strictly for Anglican services and Anglican ministers. All who had given money on the assumption that it was for a Methodist meeting-house were permitted to reclaim their subscription. It seems the Methodists then built their own frame meeting-house which building was later moved down to Clonmell near Gibbstown.

Our present day society at Hurffville claims to be the successor of the early "Bethel" at Greenwich inasmuch as many from Greenwich started a new "Bethel" by the present historic graveyard at Hurffville.

The point I here stress is that Edward Evans was the leader at Greenwich in the building of the first church or meeting house there and as a lay pastor for some years. The work there was strong and as families moved away they established Methodist societies where they went. It is said, for example, that a family

1. C.H. Moxson, *THE GREAT AWAKENING IN THE MIDDLE COLONIES*, pp. 52-53.
2. Educated at "The Academy" in Philadelphia, he went to London and was ordained to become a missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. He travelled as far as Cape May and had missions at St. Mary's, Colestown, Gloucester, Greenwich (Mt. Royal), and at Haddonfield where he lived and died at 25 years of age.
3. Dr. Nelson R. Burr so refers to the Greenwich people in his *THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN NEW JERSEY*, page 559, on the basis of the *JOURNAL* of the Rev. Nicholas Collin.

1. Burr, page 559.

2. See Asbury's *JOURNAL*, Vol. 1, p. 30 footnote.

3. J.A. Ookes (1898) MSS in N.J. Conference Historical Society files.

4. Burr, page 559.

by the name of Turner settled in what is now Turnersville. Edward Evans was a great Methodist layman in his day and he was a convert of Whitefield.

In the limits of this paper there is not space to speak of Whitefield's visits to many familiar places within our present Conference and of the possible influences that carried over from his sparking of the fires of the Great Awakening down to the coming of the Brainerds and later the circuit-riders of Methodism. Whitefield cut across denominational lines and all groups felt the impact of his preaching. Though a Calvinist, he did preach that men should have assurance of salvation.

With Gilbert Tennent of New Brunswick Whitefield, like John the Baptist, thoroughly fanned the floor and brought a baptism of power to the people of whatever religious background. It would do us all good to read of his visits to Burlington, Trenton, New Brunswick, Amwell, Allentown, Gloucester, Piles Grove, Salem and other places so well known to Methodist pastors today.

On one occasion Whitefield was sailing on a ferry-boat across the Delaware from Philadelphia to Gloucester Point. His heart was heavy but they began to sing hymns and fresh strength came to him and his companions. Just twenty-nine years later at the same Gloucester Point Wesley's missionaries, Pilmoor and Boardman landed and the work of God went forward with fresh impetus. Wouldn't it be wonderful if today fresh faith and earnest singing would prepare the way for a new and strong advance of the work of God given to "the people called Methodists"?

F. Elwood Perkins

HISTORY OF THE FIRST METHODIST CHURCH OF TRENTON

On November 21, 1738 George Whitefield preached in Trent-town in the Jerseys in the Court House, located at what is now known as State and Warren Streets, the site of the former Trenton Banking Company.

Thomas Webb, a Captain in the British Army, came to Trenton about the year 1766 and preached to people in a stable located near the corner of Greene and Fourth Streets or as they are now called Broad and Academy Streets.

In 1768 a society was formed and on April 19, 1772, the Trenton Society consisting of 19 members secured subscriptions from 122

persons for the erection of a "Meeting House". Francis Asbury laid the corner stone on April 22, 1773. The little church on the corner of Greene and Fourth Streets was probably the third Methodist Church built in North America and first in New Jersey. It was known as the "mother church" by Trenton Methodists. By 1894, from the little frame church costing \$1,000.00 with a membership of 19, there had grown eleven churches.

A great deal of revolutionary history centered around this first Methodist Church. Among the 19 original members was John Fitch, the inventor of the steamboat who was memorialized by the City of Trenton. A Boulder Memorial was erected near the sight of the wharf where his little boat used to land twenty years before Robert Fulton launched his "Clermont." The frame Meeting House was replaced in 1806 with a brick church 35' x 45', which was located on the same site. It was sold in 1838 to the Orthodox Friends. The Methodists moved to the sight of the present church on South Broad Street (just below State) and erected a brick building which was dedicated Sept. 9, 1838 and was known as the "Greene Street Church", from the name the street then bore. The location has moved only two and one half blocks and has always been located on Broad Street in the heart of downtown Trenton these 194 years.

This brick church was razed in 1894 to make way for the present commodious building of light granite. It was dedicated May 5, 1895.

Of this church, all but the exterior walls was destroyed by arson on December 14, 1956 at 4 o'clock in the morning.

Among the historical records saved by the minister, the Rev. Dr. J. Stanley Wagg and the firemen, was the original record book of the church, bearing the water mark of England, the first entry being dated April 19, 1772 and showing entries where payments were made to Francis Asbury in pounds, shillings and pence. This book also contains the names of the 122 persons who, in the same year, subscribed for the erection of a "Meeting House." Also saved from the fire was the original communion set, made in England of Britannia metal, given to the church in 1772 by Francis Asbury, who used it to serve communion to the congregation.

These items and many other historical records of the church are on display in the nave of the present church.

Myrtle H. Kriedler

Methodist Society D		
Feb 19	To Cash paid for a Book	2.6
22	To 1 st of Candles 4 th - 24 th To 1 st D ^o 4 th	2.0
28	To D ^o 4 th - May 2 nd To 1 st D ^o 4 th	2.0
May 8	To Cash paid Rob ^t Singer	10.6
19	To 1 st of Candles	1.0
22	To Cash paid Francis Asbury	6.0
28	To D ^o paid Robert Singer	13.6
June 10	To D ^o paid M ^r Asbury	1.0
	To 2 Scores (hauling lights)	3.0
July 1	To Cash paid M ^r Asbury	1.0
	To 1 st of Candles	1.0
	To Balance due the Society	11.0
		<u>54.8</u>
21	To 1 st of Candles	1.0
28	To Cash paid M ^r Asbury	1.0
Aug 1	To 1 st of Candles	1.0

NOTES

From the original record book of the church the names of Francis Asbury, Mr. Wright and Mr. Boardman appear. Francis Asbury was, of course, the pioneer bishop of the Methodist Church in America. Mr. Boardman was Richard Boardman who, with Joseph Pilmoor was the first of the Methodist preachers sent to America by John Wesley.¹ Mr. Wright was Richard Wright who came to America with Francis Asbury in 1771. Note that the payments were in pounds, shillings and pence.

The list of 64 of the 122 subscribers for building the First Methodist Church in Trenton in 1772 includes the names of many prominent families in and around Mercer, Middlesex and Monmouth Counties. Robert Singer, Joseph Toy, James Emerson, Conrad Kotts, George Ely and John Fitch, the inventor of the steamboat, were among the more influential members of the original class of 19 members. Joseph Toy was the class leader.

Wrightstown is named after the Wright family, Bordentown after the Borden, Yardville after the Yards. Names like Smith, Higbee, Hunt, DeBow, Burroughs and Howell appear frequently in early Methodist records, many continuing down to our own day.

1. See the article "The Landing of Boardman and Pilmoor at Gloucester Point," by Harry F. Green, THE HISTORICAL TRAIL, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1964.



THE SALEM CIRCUIT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

1788 - 1814

PREFACE

This is but a brief sketch of one of the early preaching circuits of the Methodist Church in Southern New Jersey, of the men who rode the Circuit and the stations they used and some of the laymen who were there and took part in the planting of Methodism in the area.

Much of the data used in this sketch is from the Stewards Book of the SALEM CIRCUIT from 1789, which was copied by William Zelley from the original owned by James Newell (1785-1862) of Salem, New Jersey.

SALEM CIRCUIT (continued)

The Circuit system was the mighty agency of expansion of the early Methodist Church. A Circuit consisted of a series of preaching stations from several miles apart to ten or twelve miles. They were established in private homes, grist and saw mills, barns, sheds or in the woods.¹

The circuits were designated two week, four week and six weeks. The four week circuits had twenty four preaching stations or more and were served by two preachers, the preacher in charge and the junior preacher, each making the total round every four weeks, following one another at two week intervals at each preaching station.²

The Methodist Episcopal Church in south Jersey was a part of the WEST JERSEY CIRCUIT until the year 1788. The West Jersey Circuit being organized in 1781. During the year 1788 the SALEM CIRCUIT, comprising all of what is now Camden, Gloucester, Atlantic, Salem, Cumberland and Cape May Counties was formed.³

In the period, 1788-1814, the Circuit extended from near Barnsboro in Gloucester County to the lower end of Cape May County, and from the town of Salem to English Creek on the Great Egg Harbor River and to the Forks of the Little Egg Harbor at Pleasant Mills.⁴

To cover this Circuit the itinerant preachers had to ride 300 miles and preach at some 128 different stations.

THE STATIONS

The stations were scattered along the several large rivers and streams and the existing main and side roads and trails. The Stewards Book of the Salem Circuit lists some 128 stations. Of this number 108 were names of householders, 13 were in meeting houses of the Society, 3 were in grist and saw mills, 3 were in meeting houses of other denominations, and several were in the School Houses.⁵

Some of the preaching stations on the Circuit were: OLD GLOUCESTER COUNTY, containing the present Camden, Atlantic and Gloucester Counties –

Jesse Chew's

Near Barnsboro, old stone house still standing and in use.

Bethel M.H.

Hurffville, Gloucester County.

Sandtown

Mt. Royal in Gloucester County.

Inglishes

English Creek, Atlantic County.

Head of the River
(Tuckahoe Chapel)

The present Head of the River Church near Tuckahoe.

The Forkes

Pleasant Mills, Atlantic County.

SALEM COUNTY –
Broadneck Meeting House

At Olivet between Centerton and Elmer, the "Hell's Neck" of Abbott's time.

Murphy's Church

In Friendship, north of Elmer.

Pilesgrove or Vannaman's
Meeting House

2.30 miles west of the town of Sharptown.

Salem Meeting House

Walnut Street in the city of Salem.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY –
Eli Budds

Near the Cumberland Mill Pond.

Cohansey

The present town of Bridgeton.

Michael Swing's

New Englandtown near Fairton on the Sea Breeze Road.

Port Elizabeth M.H.

In the town of Port Elizabeth near the present church.

Barlow Williams

East of the road leading to the East Point Light in the town of Heislerville

CAPE MAY COUNTY
John Goff's Meeting House

1.60 miles east of the town of Eldora, just south of the state highway on the hill.

Abraham Woolson's Near the Cape May County Airport, the building has been destroyed in recent years.

Phillip Cresse's (y) Near Cape May Court House on Route 9.⁶

The Quarterly Meetings of the Salem Circuit were held at the station having a large house or shelter for the whole circuit. The meetings were held at the following stations:

Salem	Tuckahoe Meeting House
Broadneck	John Murphy's Church
Egg Harbor (Bargaintown, English Creek)	Pilesgrove Camp Meeting (west of Sharptown, Vanneman's M.H.)
Bethel Meeting House	Port Elizabeth M.H.
Morris River (Port Elizabeth)	Cohansey ⁷ .
Penns Neck	

The summer Quarterly Meeting was held as a three day Camp Meeting with all the circuit attending.

The first Quarterly Meeting of the Salem Circuit was held at Salem on May 17, 1789, with James Oliver Cromwell, the presiding elder, Joseph Cromwell, John Cooper and Nathaniel B. Mills as the preachers.

The Stewards Book lists some thirty stations reporting with an average collection for each class and society of 1 pound and 15 shillings. The total monies reported were about 33 pounds.

The sums paid out were:

James Oliver Cromwell	1-19-16
expenses	9- 6
Joseph Cromwell	6-00-00
his wife	6-00-00
John Cooper	6-00-00
expenses	4- 6
Nathaniel B. Mills	6-00-00
expenses	10- 6
Henry Firth, layman, for a book to record Baptisms	12-00
Sent to Conference	1-11- 6

In the Quarterly Meeting held at Tuckahoe in the fall of 1799 "note paid to James Sterling towards the Salem Meeting House."⁸

THE RIDERS OF THE CIRCUIT

In the period from 1788 to 1814 some 53 preachers rode the Salem Circuit. Contained in the list are some well known names who did much in the planting of Methodism in "the hard soil" of Southern Jersey.

A representative list would contain the following names:

James Oliver Cromwell		Thomas Ware	1758-1842
Simon Pyle	1759-1822	Nathan Swain	1767-1845
Sylvester Hutchinson	1756-1840	Michael Coates	1767-1814
John Merrick	1739-1798	Benjamin Fisler	1769-1854
Richard Swain	1763-1809		9.
BENJAMIN ABBOTT	1732-1796		
John Vannaman	1752-1803		
John McClaskey			
William Budd	-1809		
Solomon Sharp	1771-1836		

John Vannaman of Pilesgrove and William Budd of New Mills were local preachers. They did yeoman service on the Circuit. Both men were well known to Francis Asbury who sparked the fires of Methodism on the Circuit by his visits.

These men were the Evangelical Calvary of early Methodism with Benjamin Abbott as the out rider.

THE LAYMEN

In between the visits of the circuit preacher the local classes were served by the band, class leader and local preacher. These men were the unsung heroes in early Methodism on the Circuits.

Some of the men on the Salem Circuit were:

Henry T. Firth	Eli Budd	Hannah Nichols
John Johnson	Michael Swing	William Brooks
Edward Simmons	John Murphy	Jacob Mulford
Isaac Roberson	Daniel Heisler	William Mulford

The early Methodist Circuit rider captured the land by giving to the people of the time a doctrine he could live with, "the doctrine of Free Grace." After the land was secured a permanent preaching place was the next concern. Churches like families cannot live or thrive in hired or temporary quarters. So the circuit rider became a leader in a meeting house building program.

The bands and classes became societies on the Salem Circuit and built permanent quarters, which in time became the churches of South Jersey Methodism of today.¹¹

THE CIRCUIT

In 1790 the BETHEL CIRCUIT was carved out of the old Salem Circuit. The growth of Methodism was such, that the old Circuit became too large to handle with the preachers at hand.

The BETHEL CIRCUIT included the present Gloucester, Camden, and Atlantic Counties. In 1803 the Cape May Circuit and Gloucester Circuits were formed from the balance. In the year 1807 the Cumberland Circuit was formed reducing the outbounds of the circuit again.

The Salem Circuit had served its purpose and gave way to something better in the spread of Methodism. Many of the great and near great riders of the circuit have held forth in the many preaching stations on this old circuit, preaching the doctrine of "free grace, where a man may repent, believe and be saved." Many members of the societies have come and gone, but the old meeting houses still left are the outposts of the work started by James Oliver Cromwell and his troop of evangelical calvary in 1788.¹²

FOOTNOTES

1. In the summer when some of the cabins and barns proved too small the congregation would repair to the nearest woods and erect brush arbors and seats. This was the start of camp meetings.
2. This system proved a means for the junior preacher to get his education, serving under the preacher in charge in the field.
3. See the sketch.
4. Joseph Henry Bennett and Robert Bevis Steelman, "Along the Asbury Trail," Books 1-4, covering the work of Francis Asbury in pictures, maps and text. In manuscript, 1962.
5. Stewards Book of the Solem Circuit from 1789, copied by William Zelley. "Along the Asbury Trail," Books 1-4

6. Joseph Henry Bennett, "The Preaching Stations of Benjamin Abbott in the Jerseys: Stations of Abbott and the Salem Circuit with descriptions and maps," (Unpublished), 1962
7. During the period 1788-1814, most of these stations had buildings or camp meeting rounds.
8. The value of the pound varied in this period. The preacher received less than \$30.00 a quarter.
9. Robert B. Steelman, HISTORY OF METHODISM IN SOUTHERNMOST JERSEY, (unpublished thesis, Temple University, 1962). "List of Preachers appointed to serve in Southernmost Jersey, 84 ff. The Stewards Book of the Salem Circuit from 1789.
10. C.A. Malmsbury, THE LIFE, LABORS AND SERMONS OF REV. CHARLES PITMAN, D.D. (Philadelphia: Methodist Episcopal Book Room, 1887), "The West Jersey District," chapter 4, pages 48-60. List of officials on the circuits.
11. The circuit system was largely responsible for the poor location of some of the meeting houses and churches. The first church served the congregation at the time without much thought for the future.
12. "Along the Asbury Trail," Books 1-4. Meeting Houses on the Salem Circuit. "The Preaching Stations of Benjamin Abbott.

(Joseph Henry Bennett)

ALONG THE ASBURY TRAIL

A Compilation of the Preaching Places of Francis Asbury in N.J.

Bishop Francis Asbury in his *Journal* records, on his preaching tours through New Jersey, more than 100 places and people he visited within the bounds of the present New Jersey Conference. The following is a list of these "preaching stations" with dates of his visits and a few pertinent remarks about each one. It is to be noted that the Bishop undoubtedly preached and visited other places in New Jersey, for his *Journal*, particularly in the early years, often has gaps of almost a week or more between entries. The following list, however, is concerned only with the places and people Asbury mentions. No attempt is made to list all the people. This is meant to be a list of his preaching places within the Conference.

STATION	DATES	REMARKS
ABSECON	4/20/1809	A Class was organized here following a revival in 1796, ⁷ The first church was soon erected near the present church. It appears on the Bethel Circuit in 1797, ^{8,1}

STATION	DATES	REMARKS
ADELPHIA (See Monmouth)		
ALLENTOWN	10/1/1790 6/14/1800 5/10/1813	A post town of Upper Freehold on the road from Bordentown to Freehold. ² The society was organized in 1810. Asbury first preached in the town in 1813. ³ (See Hughes)
ALLOWAY (See Glass House)		
AURA	4/12/1809 4/27/1814	Asbury preached in the Union Chapel. "A neat building, two stories high, forty by thirty-six feet, built on the plan I furnished them." ⁴ It was built in 1806 and in 1878 was moved to its present location and rebuilt. John Early was one of the original trustees.
BARCALOW, STEPHEN	4/29/1806 6/21/1815	An early member of the first society to be formed in Monmouth County at Adelphia. ⁵ He is buried in the old Methodist cemetery.
BATES, DANIEL	5/13/1802 4/25/1806 4/11/1807 4/16/1807 4/28/1814	Daniel Bates (1752-1815) was a trustee of Bethel M.H. ⁶ His home was a preaching place for many itinerants. Ezekiel Cooper and Richard Sneath preached there. Sneath later married Bates' widow. ⁷ (See Bethel)
BETHEL	10/13/1786 10/9/1789 9/19/1791 5/13/1802 4/25/1806 4/12/1807 4/27/1814	The present Bethel Church at Hurffville. John Early was largely responsible for starting this church along with William Dilkes. (See also Daniel Bates and John Early).

STATION	DATES	REMARKS
BLACKMAN, DAVID	4/19/1809	(1747-1821). He lived in English Creek, Atlantic County. A trustee of the old English M.H., now Asbury Church, and a Class Leader. He is buried in the yard of the Zion M.H., Bargaintown. He is the father of Learner Blackman, an early itinerant. ⁸
BRIDGETON (See Cohansey)		
BROADNECK CHAPEL	4/14/1809	Pittsgrove Township, Salem Conty. A church was built here about 1785. The new Olivet Church near Centerton is the outgrowth of early Methodist preaching in Broadneck. Benjamin Abbott preached here often. ⁹
BUDD, ISAAC	4/26/1776 4/30/1776	Lived near Trenton. Buried at New Mills. ¹⁰ (See New Mills)
BUDD, JOHN	8/9/1796	One of the Budd family, prominent in early N.J. Methodism. John lived near Hacketts-town. ¹¹
BUNN, JONATHAN	7/7/1806	Lived in Pennington. Converted by Capt. Thomas Webb. Joined the Methodist Society in Trenton in 1774 and soon became a steward and leader of a class which met in his home. ¹²
BURLINGTON	11/6/1771 3/29/1772 4/29/1772 5/5-7/1772 5/21/1772 5/25/1772 5/29/1772 6/16/18/72 7/4/1772 7/6-8/1772 7/29/1772 10/24-6/72 6/5,6/1773 5/30/1774 11/29-12/2-1774	The Society here, one of the earliest in the State, was organized by Capt. Webb. This was Asbury's first preaching place in N.J. and he preached here more times than any place in the State. ¹³ (See also James Sterling.)

STATION	DATES	REMARKS
	4/23/1776 8/16/1784 10/17/1786 10/6/1788 5/21/1789 10/6/1789 9/27/30/90 7/12/1792 9/5/1792 9/5/1793 10/2,3/94 10/5/1796 7/18/1797 10/5/1797	6/11/1798 10/3/1798 5/12/1799 6/11,12/1800 7/29/1802 5/16/1803 6/5/1804 8/9/1804 7/31/1805 4/27/1806 4/19/1807 5/7/1810 5/4-6/1813
CAPE	10/3/1786	Cape May. Appears on the Salem Circuit in 1806. No church until 1843. ¹⁴
CARPENTER'S BRIDGE	6/3/1772 4/22/1806 4/10/1809	The present Mantua. Jesse Chew lived near here. The first church was built in 1815. Abbott preached here. ¹⁵ (See Jesse Chew)
C'S	9/16/1791	Probably John Campion. Lived at Buena Vista, Atlantic County. Friendship Church near Landisville is the outgrowth of a society formed near here in 1794. ¹⁶
CHEESECAKE M.H.	5/1/1806	Cheesequake, Middlesex County, near Matawan. Early Methodist services were held in a Baptist Church. The foundation of a church and an overgrown cemetery mark the site where Old School Baptists had a log cabin. ¹⁷
CHEW, JESSE	6/23/1772 7/14/1772	A longstanding friend of Asbury, Jesse Chew lived near Mantua on the Sewell-Mantua road. The Chew home, now owned by C.W. Starr, is just below the railroad bridge. Chew (1738-1812) and his wife Mary (1739-1816) are buried in a little family cemetery across the railroad from their home. ¹⁸

STATION	DATES	REMARKS
CLONMELL	5/10/1802	Asbury dined at Robert Newell's and at 3 o'clock Bishop Whatcoat preached. The church was built by Philip Ebert and William Duke and moved in 1789 at night on wheels to near Gibbstawn. Services ended in 1823. ¹⁹

COATE, AZAIL	4/17/1807 c. 4/28- 7/17/1814
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(1781-1815). He lived outside of Lumberton. He cared for the Bishop during a serious 12 week illness in 1814. Henry Boehm helped. The Coate home is a small stucco house at the intersection of the Medford-Lumberton road and the Springville road. Azail was a brother of the Rev. Michael Coate. (See Lumberton)²⁰

AZAIL COATE HOME near Lumberton.

(Photo courtesy Joseph Henry Bennett)

COHANSEY	8/21/1783 4/15,16/09 4/25/1814	Asbury first preached in the old Court House and then in the Commerce Street M.E. Church, first organized by Jahn Murphy and Michael Swing in 1803. ²¹ It is now the First Methodist Church, Bridgeton.
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COVELL, CAPT.	5/18/1802	An old Methodist Sea Capt. who lived near Clarksburg, Monmouth County. In the Covell Hill cemetery were buried Mardecai and Hannah Lincoln, ancestors of President Lincoln. ²² The cemetery, now largely overgrown sits on a hill on the Schibner farm off Route 524, about 2 miles south of the Clarksburg Methodist Church. ²³
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STATION	DATES	REMARKS
CRANBURY	10/1/1790	Asbury lodged at the home of Dr. Samuel Jacques. The church was not built until 1848. ²⁴
CRESSY, PHILLIP	9/19/1784 10/3/1786	The Cressy's were a prominent family in Cope Moy County. Phillip was a mason who probably lived near Cope Moy Court House. ²⁵
CROSS CREEK	6/14/1800	A small tributary of Block Creek in Fairfield Township, Burlington County. ²⁶ This must have been in the vicinity of Crosswicks.
CROSSWICKS	3/27/1772 4/25/1776 10/6/1788 10/11/1790 9/5/1792 10/1/1794 6/25/1795 7/19/1797 10/4,5/97 6/12/1798 10/2/1798 6/14/1800 5/17/1802 7/28/1802 7/10/1813	A strong Quaker Settlement. The M.H. still standing was built in 1773. Asbury preached there. The Methodists built a house in 1790. Asbury mentions staying at father Joseph Lovell's; David Abbot's, a son of Benjamin Abbott; and the widow Bunting's. ²⁷
DEERFIELD	10/10/1789 4/14/1809	Asbury preached in the "Methodistico-Presbyterian Church." It was Presbyterian and was built in 1771. It is still used and is the oldest stone church in continuous use in South Jersey. John Broinard and Enoch Green, prominent 18th century Presbyterian preachers are buried here. Early Methodist preaching was at the home of Holmes Porvin who, in 1781 with 3 others, was suspended from the Presbyterian Church for having Methodist leanings. ²⁸

FOOTNOTES

1. Robert B. Steelmon, HISTORY OF METHODISM IN SOUTHERN-MOST JERSEY, (unpublished thesis, Temple University, 1962), 42.
2. Francis Asbury, THE JOURNAL, ed. Elmer T. Clark, (London: Epworth Press and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958), I, 651 fn.
3. Asbury, II, 730.
4. Asbury, II, 596. Frank B. Stonger (ed.) THE METHODIST TRAIL IN NEW JERSEY (Camden: The New Jersey Annual Conference of the Methodist Church, 1961), 61.
5. William Moffett Smith, HISTORY OF THE METHODIST SOCIETY OF MONMOUTH, 1959, 5.
6. The abbreviation M.H. throughout is Meeting House.
7. Hazel H. B. Simpson, THE HISTORY OF THE BETHEL METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH (Hurffville, N.J., 1942), 15, 35.
8. Field notes. Joseph Henry Bennett, "The Blockmons of Great Egg Harbor," THE HISTORICAL TRAIL, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2.
9. Steelmon, 28.
10. Field notes.
11. Asbury, II, 93fn.
12. IBID., 512. METHODIST TRAIL, 269
13. See JOURNAL record.
14. SALEM CIRCUIT'S STEWARD BOOK, 124.
15. Field notes. Joseph Henry Bennett, NOTES OF THE PREACHING STATIONS OF BENJAMIN ABBOTT IN THE JERSEYS 1772-1795. (unpublished, 1962), 14.
16. Asbury, I, 694 fn.
17. Asbury, II, 504 fn. Field notes.
18. Field notes.
19. Asbury, II, 337. METHODIST TRAIL, 157.
20. Asbury, II, 536 fn. Field notes. Also Henry Boehm, JOURNAL for 1814 (microfilm at Drew University Library). See picture.
21. JOURNAL references. John L. Ewing, THE STORY OF FIRST METHODIST CHURCH (Bridgeton, N.J., 1953), 4.
22. Asbury, II, 339 fn.
23. Field notes.
24. Asbury, I, 651 fn. METHODIST TRAIL, 243.
25. See Bennett, THE SALEM CIRCUIT.
26. Asbury, II, 236.
27. JOURNAL references. Field notes.
28. Asbury, I, 610. Session records of the Deerfield Presbyterian Church, 41. Field notes.



HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Anyone may become a member of the Historical Society by the payment of one dollar annual dues to Mr. Walter B. VanSant, treasurer, 333 Poplar Ave., Linwood. The Benjamin Abbott Life Membership is fifty dollars. This life Membership money is invested, and the income is used for the work of the Society.

"Along the Asbury Trail," a slide story of Bishop Francis Asbury in New Jersey, can be borrowed from the Conference Office after September 1st. This consists of 100 slides, script and tape recordings. It has been prepared by a committee of the Society.

The Graves Committee wishes to thank all who assisted in the placing of Christian flags on the graves of the deceased ministers of our Conference. This is a small tribute we pay to our honored "soldiers of the cross."

The Historical Society, since January, has been in its own Room at the Conference Office Building on route 70, Cherry Hill. A member of the Society will be in the Room every Monday 10-4 to assist you in your research or help you in any way we can. You may use the Room at other times, however, if you wish.

Recent acquisitions of the Society include:

The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury, 3 Volumes

The History of American Methodism, 3 Volumes

**The Salt of the Earth, Norwegian-Danish Methodism
in America - Arlow W. Andersen**

**Conference Trunk used to keep the Conference Secretaries
Minutes.**

Historical information, records, old pictures, and information of special events are wanted and should be sent to our Librarian-Custodian, Doctor J. Hillman Coffee, 201 Virginia Avenue, Westmant. All editorial correspondence, manuscripts, comments and suggestions should be sent to Reverend Robert B. Steelman, 18 Fayette Street, Bridgeton, or to Doctor Coffee.

